

Center for

Educator Compensation Reform



Engagement and Communication

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Purpose

To provide ideas and strategies for:

1. Engaging teachers in the development and implementation of new teacher compensation systems; and
2. Communicating information about those systems to educators and the public.

Assumptions

1. Any new pay plan for teachers is bound to be controversial.
2. There is no single model or “right” way to structure teacher compensation.
3. Selecting an appropriate mix of salary incentives is dependent on:
 - determining what is to be accomplished;
 - making a judgment about the best means to accomplish this.

What does the district or state hope to accomplish by creating a new teacher pay system?

1. Reward teaching practices that lead to increased student learning
2. Attract and retain teachers in high-need schools
3. Attract teachers to high-need subject fields
4. Reshape professional development
5. Create new career structures to keep accomplished teachers from leaving the classroom

Step 1: Assemble a representative compensation committee.

A. Who should be included? (district example)

1. Superintendent
2. Teacher union/association representative(s)
3. Additional teachers
4. Principal(s)
5. Other central office personnel
6. School board member
7. Other community representatives

B. How big should the committee be?

✓ **Rule of thumb: 10-15 members**

C. Who should lead the committee?

Possibilities:

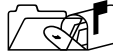





1. Co-chairs
2. Single chair who can represent multiple views

Role of collective bargaining

- Teachers may vote on pay plan as part of contract package **or**
 - Pay plan could be approved in a special vote separate from a full contract **or**
 - District and union/association may decide not to try to place the new pay program in the contract immediately.
- ✓ **Where there is no collective bargaining, still advisable to poll teacher opinion**

Step 2: Plan carefully.

What broad categories of responsibilities should the committee have?

-  Select the type of plan.
-  Determine a timeline for the work.
-  Develop working knowledge of pay-for-performance options and experiences in other districts and states.
-  Agree on what the plan should aim to accomplish.
-  Make other important decisions.
-  Bring in neutral, third-party facilitator if needed.

Step 3: Design the new compensation plan.

What are the most important principles that the committee should consider?

1. Based on objective criteria
2. Understandable
3. Rewards are attainable
4. Feasible
5. Affordable
6. Sustainable

Step 4: Build support for the work, and eventually, the plan

Communication methods:

1. Written materials
2. Meetings
3. Electronic communication

Strategies:

1. Choose language carefully.
2. Give the plan a name and an identity.
3. Anticipate the critics and skeptics.
4. Communicate with the media.

Step 5: Develop a feedback loop to make mid-course corrections

1. Focus groups
2. Satisfaction surveys

Step 6: Evaluate the results

Formal evaluation by neutral third party

1. **Formative** – during first couple of years of implementation
2. **Summative** – after program has been in place at least 2-3 years

How to design a 3-step communication plan

1. Set goals
2. Develop an action plan
 - a. Identify your audience
 - b. Design multiple means of communicating with each audience
 - c. Assign tasks
 - d. Set timelines
3. Evaluate progress

A model from South Carolina

Goals

1. Establish a regular and timely communication process between the SCTAP office and each participating school.
2. Raise the awareness of SCTAP among educators and non-educators (parents and community members) across the state.
3. Use positive publicity to increase funding.
4. Garner support for the program from state-wide stakeholders.
5. Use media outlets effectively to promote SCTAP.

Examples from South Carolina's action plan

Type	Public	Person Responsible	Time Frame	Goal
After-school Q & A meetings	Internal	Project Director	Monthly	1,2
Train at least 1 teacher from each school re: payouts	Internal	Project Director	Annually	4
Establish positive relationships with journalists	External	Program Specialist	Weekly	2,3, 4,5
Conduct regional town hall meetings	External	Project Director	Monthly	2,4 15

Examples: How SC will evaluate the success of its communication plan

Goal 2: Raise the awareness of SCTAP among educators and non-educators across the state.

1. In partnership with the Anderson Research Group, conduct a baseline (Year 1) survey of educators and non-educators across SC via random sampling to rate the awareness of SCTAP.
2. Administer the survey each subsequent year to note if the awareness levels are increasing.

Evaluation examples from SC (cont.)

Goal 5: Use media outlets effectively to promote SCTAP.

1. Monitor news outlets across the state and collect articles on SCTAP each year.
2. Compare both the number of articles published and the percentage that are positive, neutral, or negative.
3. Compare these data longitudinally.